

NEXT WEEK: SKINNER IN "MISTER ANTONIO" AT THE BROAD—"FOLLIES AT THE FORREST"

This Proteus Isn't Scared By His Roles

Yet They Include Ghosts and Scarecrows and Other Creatures

The one remains, the many change and pass, while an admirable description of the single-role actor would be the worst label in the world for George Hassell, who is playing with such rare unction the part of the money-lender in "The Old Man from Brazil," at the Lyric Theater.

Mr. Hassell is, besides, a theatrical maverick. He has read much, traveled, studied and monotonized and is so replete with good "copy" that even the most retentive brain might quail at the task of transmitting all his taking ideas and suggestions and impressions.

"I have two great sorrows in life. One is that I've never had a proper chance to do Dickens's characters in the theater. The other is that the physicians have declared me from the king of indoor sports. No more for me the festive flagon, the cheering cocktail or the hilarious highball. My health wouldn't stand that kind of excitement, so from interior decoration I have switched to exterior. Behold in me, sir, a splinter in oak. My 'school' I should say is impressionistic. I take, for example, a pastoral scene with a chastely classic pump in the middle. 'Oh, what a grand tree!' remarks a friend. Saying nothing to him, I meditatively dab a bit of green on, and suddenly, my artistic conscience, which was formed an angel into a browsing cow, and a lyrical lane into a purring brook with less trouble than it takes me to discuss it."

"I'm seriously, I am hipped on the subject of Dickens," said he, with real appreciation of a master in his voice. "Wait till you see 'The Highway of Life,' the dramatization of David Copperfield, which was done at His Majesty's in London, but which hasn't come here. A Micawber: what a part! I would have given half of my life's highway to have done it." Mr. Hassell struck an attitude suggesting most amusingly "the remains of a fallen tower" in that immortal volume, "Chadband." Exuding oil and the odor of toast. Here he expanded, and he greatly and took on the aroma of self-conscious sanctity.

"Why don't you get some one to adapt a Dickens novel properly and play in it?" he was asked. The actor doesn't seem to think much of such adaptations were successful, but expressed himself as always interested and alert for such a part. He didn't have many kind words for musical comedy, but the topic brought him around to his theory of clowns and clowning. "I'm in this present role fresh from 'The Tempest,'" he added. "I just play 'Tinsel' as if he were Stephano. Players are too apt to treat Shakespearean fools reverently. They forget that nonsense is

Ed Wynn, Who Soon Passes to Lyric in "Passing Show"

I was born in Philadelphia, November 9, 1886. Played violin at children's concert at Academy of Music when ten years of age.

At fourteen years of age was one of the founders of the Balzazo Theatrical Organization, now an annual event in the city.

At fifteen years of age started taking Wharton Course at University of Pennsylvania.

At sixteen years of age ran away from home and joined traveling repertoire company for \$12 per week. Thurber, Nasher Company 10-20-30. With it twenty-seven weeks. Stranded at Bangor, Maine, Wynn played in eleven different shows a week—matinee every day but Monday. Played piano in the hotel and took up collection to get money to go home.

Off stage seven months—eloped again—wrote his own vaudeville act, Wynn and Lewis. Jack Lewis is now in vaudeville doing monologues.

Been on the stage fourteen years and wrote all my own material, such as dialogues and songs, etc.

At seventeen years of age went on vaudeville stage, where I remained for eleven years, playing a different act each year excepting the use of "The Funny Hat."

Wrote all my parts and now working on material for "Passing Show of 1917."

Will be thirty years old ninth of November (in Philadelphia). Son of Joseph Leopold, retired hat manufacturer.

Am negotiating with Mr. Harry Perry to send my acts and writings to England and Australia.

Am writing book, "Criticizing Critics" (Not Dramatic). Am writing book, "Just Plain Nut."

Married Miss Hilda Keenan, who made big hit as Aggie, in "Within the Law." Miss Keenan is the daughter of Frank Keenan, the eminent actor.

On July 27 last son was born, named after granddad, "Frank Keenan Wynn."

Will appear in two screen productions next July, of my own writing.

Have signed with Schuberts for next five years.

My first appearance professionally in Smith's Theater, Bridgeport, Conn., August 8, 1902, as Lord Pennington in "Mrs. Jack."



Here is the original Jane Cowell, of "Common Clay," now at the Garrick.



Here is Miss Claire's "Follies" version of Farrar's Carmen. It is an uncanny impersonation and contrasts widely with the parody at the right.



And here is the imitation of Miss Cowell, as it will be seen at the Forrest.

"not for an age, but all time." I don't see why. Begone, thou malapert! shouldn't be voiced in the same vein as 'Get out, you bloody idiot!' Facial play, though, is highly important in broad comedy. I consider one of the greatest compliments I ever got was the opinion that I could look like a retreating turtle. As to make-up, that's largely a matter of mood. Large mood, large eyebrows; repressed mood, repressed wrinkles and so forth.

"I've acted pretty much everywhere—Africa, Australia, England—where I was born—and America. I've done every conceivable sort of part in stock, musical shows, tragedy and comedy. My versatility got its hardest twist in Pittsfield, Mass., where I went to fill a week's engagement and stayed about a year. It was a queer company, composed of lots of Broadway actors who came there, filled the social atmosphere and stayed. We really acted everything. By the way, I began as a 'heavy.'"

Mr. Hassell gave the final flourish to his interview by surprising when he said he had begun his career in the British army. He got a bullet in the chest in the Boer War. But what's a bullet more or less to a man who has a straw man and David Harum, a Micawber and four thousand other characters rolled up in his head? B. D.

On Their Way Frances Starr will begin a limited engagement at the Broad Street Theatre Monday, November 27, when she will be seen in her new play, "Little Lady in Blue," a comedy with its scenes laid in France and England in the year of 1829. The play presents some pictures of the great old seagoing who helped Nelson make England supreme on the seas. Miss Starr has the role of a young English girl who has been a governess, but who plays the part of a heroine in order to get hold of some money with which to lighten her poverty. The Knickerbocker, in West Philadelphia, is on the job with an announcement of the great local production of "The Home Without Children," by Robert McLaughlin, for the week of November 6. Of course, "Old Home Week" will be celebrated.

EVIDENCE FROM "COMMON CLAY"

Being the two crucial bits of dialogue, the first from act two of "Common Clay" at the Garrick, the second from act three, by which the audience and the people of the play learn that the lawyer, Judge Filson, has been cross-examining his own illegitimate daughter.

Judge Filson (Relating the story of a youthful indiscretion)—I asked her to marry me. She refused. She said she would be wrecking my life. And then she did what women can do so damned well—she sacrificed herself. The next day she was found floating down the river, just below the city.

Mr. Fullerton—And what of the child? Judge Filson—It was never born. She mailed me this note: "When you get this note, Sam, I'll be dead. I won't pull you down with me, and I hope you'll take the chance I am giving you to go up. Now, don't act like a fool and give the thing away. It will be too late to do any good. I want to repay you for being straight with me, and this is the best way I know how. Good-by—Dolly Montrose. P. S.—I want you to go to the top."

Judge Filson—Let me ask the witness a question. Mrs. Neal, have you any good reason for declining to tell me who this girl's father and mother were?

Mrs. Neal—I don't know who they were—that is—

Judge Filson—Don't know who either of them was?

Mrs. Neal—I knew her mother.

Judge Filson—And have you a good reason for not telling who she was?

Mrs. Neal—I've promised not to and I've kept my word so far. That child herself thought up to now that I was her mother. As I am a Christian woman, I have tried to be a mother to her.

Judge Filson—May it please the court, I will not press this woman any further. I am sure had you been her mother her career would have been different. But you can't expect much of those who come of a bad lot.

Mrs. Neal—She didn't come of a bad lot, she didn't. Some might call her mother bad, but her father was one of the biggest men in this town.

Judge Filson—Well, he ought to be here right now. Where is he?

Mrs. Neal—Judge, your honor, I don't know who he was. Nobody knows. He don't even know himself.

Judge Filson—What?

Mrs. Neal—It was this way—I'm going to tell it all—and she loved him and didn't want anything to stand in his way. "If I tell him what's happened he'll want to marry me," she says, "to set it right, and that will be ruin to him. Nothin' must stand in his way," she said. "He mustn't even know that the child was born. And I wouldn't tell me who the man was, and I don't know to this day, but she said I had to help her to help him. And I took the baby, and I said, 'I'll help you, Dolly.' "I want that 'kid' to be educated and reared as though nothing had ever happened," she said.

Judge Filson—Dolly!

Mrs. Neal—That was her name, lawyer. She was a woman of the town—they called her Dolly Montrose. And the next day they found her body floating down the river. She didn't want to stand in the man's way, and she didn't want either him or the child

OTIS SKINNER ON DICTION AND THE STAGE

With Otis Skinner returning, after many a relatively long absence, to the city that is his home, it is interesting to recall sundry wise words on better English for the stage uttered by him within the hearing of a New York newspaper man.

"The stage has a far more subtle influence over our actions in the classroom or the personal of business institutions," said Mr. Skinner, who will appear at the Broad Monday. "Especially do we go to the theater at the impressionable, habit-forming age, predisposed to admire what we see and hear. Admiration soon turns to imitation and imitation to adoption of the speech and manner of the model."

"This has been noticeable in the rank and file of my own profession. I recall how prone the members of Sir Henry Irving's company were to take on suggestions of the eccentric delivery of their chief. Lawrence Barrett's company was strongly imbued with the pedantic abomination of the star and the members of John McCullough's support were nearly all little McCulloughs. During the height of Ada Rehan's popularity at Daly's theater, it was always amusing to hear young women both on and off the stage imitating the Rehan drawl."

"The dramatic art of England and America suffers from want of standard, especially as regards its pronunciation and enunciation. It is not so with the stars in France and Germany. In those countries the spoken language is to be heard in its perfection from the stages of the leading theaters, and foreign students of the native tongue are sent to listen to plays to attain their ears to correctness. This is, alas! not the condition with us. Slovenliness, while not the rule, is too often found, and pronunciation obscures painfully at times 't' before 'e,' however, we are bettering the speech of our American actors and we are finding that many of them are not past vocal cure."

"In school and college much can be accomplished for the purity of stage English. What would be of value would be speech classes that would have for part of their work the criticism of the manner of actors in high school plays that are produced on the stages of various cities. Faulty stage enunciation, instead of being a menace by being a model, would become a horrible thing, the young critics could discuss the faults in class with imitation and examples after an evening at the play."

"Like the botany and geology classes that are sent among the plants and rocks, the students of the spoken word find examples among the best and the worst of actors and public speakers. Speech experts should be the teachers of such classes and form a part of the faculty of every college in America."

"And think of the stimulus to the actor, when he knew that a large group of young and eager critics is attending his performance to pass upon his enunciation."



A LA TOM DALY Otis Skinner, who returns to Philadelphia via the Broad next Monday, has exchanged the vincible beggar of "Kismet" for the equally vincible organ grinder of Booth Tarkington's new play, "Mister Antonio."

WHERE METRO SHOOTS ITS CELLULOID



A glimpse of a corner of the Rolfe-Metro studio, where the director will come from who is to produce the Evening Ledger prize scenario, "Phil and Dolphins." Work will start within the next fortnight.

Alla Nazimova For Photoplay, But Not Movies

Star of Brenon "War Brides" Praises Intensity of Screen

(The following defense of motion pictures is from an interview with Alla Nazimova, who held out against them for a long time, finally giving in to the persuasion of Herbert Brenon, who will present the Russian star in a film version of "War Brides." Mr. Brenon also directed the William Fox spectacle, "A Daughter of the Gods," now at the Chestnut Street Opera House.)

It used to be that when a player so far forgot the dignity of the theatrical profession as to appear in a motion picture, friends would gather in little groups and speak of the incident in hushed tones and with grave expressions. You almost expected them to send wreaths of immortelles to the dear departed. It wasn't "dona." It was as terrible a faux pas as wearing satin slippers with a riding habit. Those daring pioneers were almost ostracized from respectable theatrical society, and when their financial success was evidenced by the possession of fine homes and automobiles, these gains were looked upon by the superior "legitimates" as badges of their shame and downfall. It was understood that no one would "go into the movies" except to make money.

Nor could one blame the lofty critics of those days for their attitude. Intrinsically the pictures produced then were not artistic. The plots were crude, the photography mediocre and glaring inconsistencies appeared constantly. The sincere artist could not but shudder at the thought of being seen in such productions. But whose was the fault? The men and women who were doing their best to evolve a new art with what material they could obtain or the more talented, ones who refused to lend their aid? Personally I do not feel that there is any blame to be attached to either. The world of art, like the world of commerce, develops in all directions because of the diversity of individual ambition and taste.

Here, then, is substantial proof of the vitality of this new art—that in addition to all the other difficulties which anything new must encounter it has had to face and overcome, not mere apathy, but distrust from those who should have been most sympathetic and helpful, even if they felt a desire to join in the movement toward creating a new medium of expression. Beneath this opposition, possibly, there was a touch of antagonism, not unmixed with vague fear, that here was a new and dangerous competitor, overbidding the spoken drama in salaries, underselling it in output and impelling its playgoing public, witnessing these cheap and trashy entertainments, would become satisfied with something less than the stage itself could give and no longer be willing to play, as in the past, for the best plays offered by the greatest players and producers. That fear has been destroyed by the history of the last few years. Good plays are in as great demand as ever.

These pioneer days are now past. This is proved, not in the great mass of moving pictures we see, but in the flashes of genius which show what can be done when true artists devote themselves sincerely to creative work. On the speaking stage there have always been more bad plays than good ones, but no one ever argued from this that the drama was a failure. We must always judge an art by its best examples, not by its worst, nor even its second best.

Each art must represent a distinctive form of expression. Sculpture speaks through form, painting by form and color, music in sound, poetry in rhythmic words. But what is the essential thing which the moving picture does which cannot be done as well or better by the drama? My answer would be intensity. The photo drama eliminates from the story everything but the fundamental. There is no dialogue, except for brief explanatory sentences. Nothing is told but the essential part of the story, and so the photo drama has found its forte in EMPHASIS.

Here and There The fifth dramatic season of the Chicago Little Theater was recently opened with Allan Monkhouse's "Mary Broom," a play familiar to readers of the printed drama. It was the first American presentation of the piece.

The St. Louis Little Playhouse opens for the season on November 15, with John Galsworthy's "Joy." The theater has a seating capacity of 250.

Fritz Scheff will shortly star in a musical play, called "Husbands Guaranteed." It's an adaptation from the German.

Lee Kugel's comedy, "Old Lady No. 31," is to have a New York booking. Rachel Crothers dramatized it from the novel of the same name.

Being a Rhymed Review of "A Daughter of the Gods"

The large dressmaking bills of wives Their thrifty husbands oft regret; And ladies throw away their lives A-planning not to go in debt Sartorially; suggestion drives The thought home: "Why not ape Annette?"

Miss Kellermann, in other words, She's playing at the Opera House In a movie filled with gnomes and birds; Perhaps the cast has got a mouse Somewhere concealed within its herds Of humans, witches, cats and cows.

Wearing a sad and filmy smile, And little else, I'm forced to add, The diver moves midst scenes of guilt; A foreign ruler, old and bad, Pursues her many a weary mile— Pedestrianism seems his fad.

His kindly, young adopted son, The hero of this tale, Is also kept upon the run To save Annette; he doesn't fail To ball things up (this takes the bus) When armored in a suit of mail.

He gives the girl a deadly thrust And slays her on the city wall, While battling armies, decked in dust, Your agitated eyes appall; You see, with many a martial gust Of splendor that great city fall.

The memory of moonlit isles Will linger with you till you die. The mermaids cleaving liquid miles Are beautiful, you can't deny. Of course, the story's clear meaningless, What? You can't get it? No more egg!